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6 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
7 DISTRICT OF NEVADA

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9 ROBERTO RIQUELME,

Case No. 3:20-cv-00211-LRH-CLB

10 Plaintiff,

ORDER

11 v.

12 GEICO CASUALTY COMPANY, *et al.*,

13 Defendants.
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15 Plaintiff Roberto Riquelme initiated this action in the Second Judicial District Court for
16 Washoe County, Nevada on March 25, 2020. On April 7, 2020, on the basis of diversity
17 jurisdiction, Defendant Geico Casualty Company filed a notice of removal to this court (ECF
18 NO. 4¹).

19 After review of the complaint and Defendant's petition for removal, the court finds that it
20 requires more evidence to determine whether it has subject matter jurisdiction over this case.
21 While it appears that the parties are of diverse citizenship², Defendant has not demonstrated that
22 the amount in controversy exceeds \$75,000.

23 "[A]ny civil action brought in a State court of which the district courts of the United
24 States have original jurisdiction, may be removed by the defendant . . . to the district court of the
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26 ¹ Refers to the court's docketing number.

27 ² Plaintiff is residents of Nevada and Defendant is incorporated under the laws of Maryland and has its
28 principal place of business in Maryland.

1 United States for any district . . . where such action is pending.” 28 U.S.C. § 1441(a). Among
2 other reasons, the district courts of the United States have “original jurisdiction” where there is
3 diversity of citizenship between the parties and the amount in controversy, exclusive of interest
4 and costs, exceeds \$75,000. 28 U.S.C. § 1332(a).

5 “If . . . it appears that the district court lacks subject matter jurisdiction, the case shall be
6 remanded.” 28 U.S.C. § 1447(c). “Federal jurisdiction must be rejected if there is any doubt as
7 to the right of removal in the first instance.” *Gaus v. Miles, Inc.*, 980 F.2d 564, 566 (9th Cir.
8 1992) (citing *Libhart v. Santa Monica Dairy Co.*, 592 F.2d 1062, 1064 (9th Cir. 1979)).
9 Moreover, the removal statute is construed restrictively and in favor of remanding a case to state
10 court. *See Shamrock Oil & Gas Corp. v. Sheets*, 313 U.S. 100, 108-09 (1941); *Gaus*, 980 F.2d at
11 566.

12 After a defendant files a petition for removal, the court must determine whether federal
13 jurisdiction exists, even if no objection is made to removal. *See Rains v. Criterion Systems, Inc.*,
14 80 F.3d 339, 342 (9th Cir. 1996). The defendant always has the burden of establishing that removal
15 is proper. *Gaus*, 980 F.2d at 566. Normally this burden is satisfied if the plaintiff claims a sum
16 greater than the jurisdictional requirement. *Id.*

17 However, if the plaintiff does not claim a sum greater than the jurisdictional requirement,
18 the defendant cannot meet its burden by merely alleging that the amount in controversy is met:
19 “The authority which the statute vests in the court to enforce the limitations of its jurisdiction
20 precludes the idea that jurisdiction may be maintained by mere averment” *Id.* (quoting *McNutt*
21 *v. Gen. Motors Acceptance Corp.*, 298 U.S. 178, 189 (1936)) (emphasis omitted).

22 In some cases, it may be “‘facially apparent’ from the complaint that the jurisdictional
23 amount is in controversy.” *See Singer v. State Farm Mut. Auto. Ins.*, 116 F.3d 373, 377 (9th Cir.
24 1997) (delineating the “appropriate procedure for determining the amount in controversy on
25 removal” as described in *Allen v. R & H Oil & Gas Co.*, 63 F.3d 1326 (5th Cir. 1995)). However,
26 “[w]hen the amount is not facially apparent from the complaint, the court may consider facts in
27 the removal petition and may require parties to submit summary-judgment-type evidence relevant

1 to the amount in controversy at the time of removal.” *Kroske v. U.S. Bank Corp.*, 432 F.3d 976,
2 980 (9th Cir. 2006) (internal quotation marks omitted).


3 Here, in arguing that the amount in controversy requirement has been satisfied, Defendant
4 relies solely on the allegations in the complaint. However, the court finds that it is not facially
5 apparent from the complaint that more than \$75,000 is in controversy. It may be that medical
6 expenses alone, and other special damages claimed by plaintiffs exceed the threshold amount for
7 jurisdiction in this court, however, there has been no showing of such an amount by removing
8 defendant(s). Accordingly, jurisdiction has not been established.

9 The court will provide Defendant additional time to present “summary-judgment-type
10 evidence” showing by a preponderance of the evidence that this case meets § 1332(a)’s amount in
11 controversy requirement.

12 IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that Defendant is granted twenty (20) days from the entry
13 of this order to establish the minimum amount in controversy for federal jurisdiction. Plaintiff is
14 granted ten (10) days to file an opposition. No reply is required.

15 IT IS SO ORDERED.

16 DATED this 16th day of April, 2020.

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18 LARRY R. HICKS
19 UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE
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